

# ONE

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

### WEEK 3 - DAY 1

**S.O.A.P. DEVOTIONAL METHOD: SCRIPTURE - OBSERVATION - APPLICATION - PRAYER**

#### **SCRIPTURE:** MATTHEW 13: 20-23

“The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

#### **OBSERVATION:**

The entire chapter of Matthew 13 is dedicated to farming analogies, specifically the concept of a seed. A seed is extremely small but under the right conditions can become something much larger and significant. Jesus lays out three types of responses to His teachings with the idea of getting people to introspectively consider where they stand. Jesus wants us to have deep and productive roots and this will only happen if we submit ourselves to His instruction. Our journey as Christ-followers will always start seemingly small, but as time goes on and we abide in His word, we will begin to grow and our lives will yield a harvest exponentially greater than what we have put in.

#### **APPLICATION:**

The hardest part of healthy growth is that it takes time. There is no shortcut to spiritual growth. To become more like Jesus, we have to seek Him every single day, walking with Him one step at a time. When it comes to abiding in the Father, what is the biggest obstacle that keeps you from patiently growing and learning what He is teaching? In what area of your life are you most tempted to give up instead of remembering that in due time, your life will produce an incredible harvest of kingdom work?

#### **PRAYER:**

God give me patience to learn to walk with You. Father help me understand You are working in my life to make me more like You even when I can't see it or feel it. Please give me deep roots that aren't affected by the storms of life and that will sustain me when times get tough.

# ONE

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

### WEEK 3 - DAY 2

S.O.A.P. DEVOTIONAL METHOD: SCRIPTURE - OBSERVATION - APPLICATION - PRAYER

#### SCRIPTURE: LUKE 13:6-9

Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

#### OBSERVATION:

It is said that fig trees can take up to three years to bear good fruit. Like the tree, we take time to bear fruit as well. God doesn't expect that immediately upon becoming a Christ-follower, we know all of the Bible and pray for hours on end. Rather, He expects us to let our roots grow down deep so that we have a firm foundation upon which He can grow us. We can then bear good fruit in due time. This parable demonstrates God's willingness to be long-suffering with us as we grow. He offers daily forgiveness and the nourishment we need in order to thrive, but we have to choose to submit to what He is doing and be patient through the process.

#### APPLICATION:

We can all look back and remember times when we may not have seemed very productive. Perhaps we even squandered opportunities and the fruit of our lives was limited, if anything at all. If that is the case, will you choose to move forward trusting God to redeem your past and help you to bear good fruit? Or as you look in the past, are there times you know you were most connected with God and bearing fruit? What made that a productive season? Looking back, what are some of the richest times you have grown in God?

#### PRAYER:

Father I confess there have been times where I have neglected and ignored You. I recognize even now that time not spent with You leaves me feeling empty and guilty. Jesus redeem my moments, make my life a testimony of your amazing ability to make all things new. God in your name help me to bear good fruit that is pleasing to You and a powerful witness to the world around me.



# ONE

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

### WEEK 3 - DAY 3

**S.O.A.P. DEVOTIONAL METHOD: SCRIPTURE - OBSERVATION - APPLICATION - PRAYER**

#### **SCRIPTURE:** JOHN 6:27

Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.

#### **OBSERVATION:**

At the beginning of John 6, Jesus fed the 5,000 and had generated a significant following of people who were just interested in seeing more miracles. Jesus uses this moment in verse 27 to make it clear that while we need to feed our body, we more importantly need to feed our soul. When Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness He modeled for us that to feed our soul we must spend time seeking the Father in prayer and reading His word. In ancient times, a seal was placed on an item or place to identify ownership and acceptance. As Christ-followers, we are marked as belonging to our Savior, Jesus Christ, and we cannot feed our souls without His help. Jesus expects us ask Him for help and to accept what He gives us so we can work diligently with Him to feed our soul.

#### **APPLICATION:**

In computer programming, the term GIGO (Garbage In, Garbage Out) is used to assess the quality of a computer's work. Like a computer, if we are only filling ourselves with junk, the only byproduct we will see in our lives is junk. What ways are you feeding your soul? What ways are you chasing stuff that will quickly spoil? What is keeping you from feasting on God's word?

#### **PRAYER:**

God, help me discern between trash and treasure, junk food and soul food. Father, give me eyes to see the toxic habits and places I am dwelling in. Give me a mind and heart set on the eternal so that I never waste my life on that which spoils.

# ONE

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

### WEEK 3 - DAY 4

S.O.A.P. DEVOTIONAL METHOD: SCRIPTURE - OBSERVATION - APPLICATION - PRAYER

#### SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 5:1-4

I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit. "Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad?"

#### OBSERVATION:

God delivered Israel out of slavery and out of a hostile territory filled with hostile people. Seven nations were driven out of the land before Israel occupied the promised land. God used His power and providence to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles so that Israel could occupy the promised land. Yet in spite of all this, Israel still doubted God, chose to worship other gods, and simply failed to thrive where they were planted. We can sometimes be the same. Just as God delivered Israel, in Christ He uproots us out of slavery to sin and plants us in a fertile environment. But we have to choose to stay close to Him and submit to the plan He has to grow and prune us into people who bear quality fruit.

#### APPLICATION:

Reflect on your God story and the way God has moved mountains in your life to draw you closer to Him. Think of yourself as a vine, planted by God and given all the necessary tools to grow where God has planted you. Would the fruit you are currently yielding be sweet and edible or rotten and useless? What obstacles in your life right now are keeping you from staying near to God and being cultivated to bear good fruit?

#### PRAYER:

Jesus help me remember the ways You moved the mountains in my own life, obstacles that I thought were immovable. Father, I know that for a plant to grow, it must be pruned, so help me to subject myself to your loving and tender care. May bearing good fruit in my life be more desirable to me than any fleeting joy with which this world tries to tempt me.

# ONE

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

### WEEK 3 - DAY 5

S.O.A.P. DEVOTIONAL METHOD: SCRIPTURE - OBSERVATION - APPLICATION - PRAYER

#### SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 12:11

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

#### OBSERVATION:

Hebrews 12 opens with an admonishment to narrow our focus on Jesus and run hard toward Him. The previous chapter reminds us of those who have gone before and encourages us to run the race as well as they did, regardless of their circumstances. It is only through adversity that anything grows. Muscles must be torn apart to grow and a plant must be trimmed back and shaped to be healthy and productive. The same is true for us. We need discipline — training and sometimes painful pruning — in order to grow.

#### APPLICATION:

No one enjoys being corrected. Whether relationally or professionally, to be called out is painful and embarrassing. But when we receive correction in the right way, that pain will yield positive growth. For our lives to be fruitful, we will be pruned (by God) through the trials and victories of life that ultimately lead us closer to Him. When something unexpected in life happens, what is your gut reaction? What do you need to do to trust that the discipline God brings into your life will eventually be abundantly worthwhile?

#### PRAYER:

Father, teach me to trust You, especially when life is not going as planned. It is easy to trust You when things are going well but much harder to do so when circumstances are not favorable. Help me trust that You are always in control, no matter the circumstances and that You will use any situation I submit to You to stretch me and grow me into a more mature Christ-follower. Strengthen my faith that You work in and through all the circumstances of my life to bring about Your good and perfect plans.